

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ACDA-10 ERDA-07 OES-07 IO-13
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 EA-09
AID-05 EUR-12 NEAE-00 /130 W
-----161352Z 018876 /40

P R 161250Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3425
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY

UNCLAS NEW DELHI 7039

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ENRG IN US MNUC
SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER DESAI ON NUCLEAR POLICY

1. ACCORDING TO A SAMACHAR DESPATCH, PRIME MINISTER MORARJI DESAI TOLD A PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 16 THAT ATOMIC WEAPONS WERE NOT NEEDED FOR INDIA'S DEFENSE: "THEY ARE ONLY FOR DESTRUCTION AND CANNOT EVER WIN A WAR." HE REPORTEDLY SAID THAT ONLY CONVENTIONAL WEAPONS AND THE COURAGE OF THE PEOPLE COULD DEFEND THE COUNTRY EFFECTIVELY. ASKED TO JUSTIFY THIS POSITION WITH CHINA'S ALREADY POSSESSING SUCH WEAPONS AND PAKISTAN'S TRYING TO ACQUIRE THEM, THE PRIME MINISTER REITERATED THE POSITION, SAYING THAT HE HAD STUDIED THE ISSUE IN DEPTH BUT COULD NOT REVEAL DETAILS. HE ACCUSED THE QUESTIONER OF HIGHLIGHTING THE IMPORTANCE OF ATOMIC WEAPONS IN WAR BECAUSE HE HAD A "NUCLEAR MIND ." MR. DESAI NOTED THAT NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND THEIR POSSESSION BY MORE COUNTRIES COULD DESTROY THE WORLD AND THAT INDIA WOULD LIKE TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO REMOVE SUCH A THREAT. HE EXPLAINED THAT FOR 30 YEARS INDIA HAD OPPOSED THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS; "WE CANNOT NOW MAKE A BASIC CHANGE IN OUR POLICY." "WE SHOULD REMAIN FIRM IN OUR ATTITUDE AND HELP ERADICATE
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NUCLEAR WEAPONS." ON THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID, "WE WILL CERTAINLY CONTINUE IT, IF IT IS NECESSARY FOR OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. BUT WE WILL NOT DO IT SECRETLY. THE RESULTS OF SUCH DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE OPENED TO OTHERS." ASKED WHETHER THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION HAD IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS SUCH AS INSPECTION OF ALL NUCLEAR DEVELOPMENT WORK BEFORE SUPPLYING

NUCLEAR FUEL FOR INDIA, THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS NOT AWARE OF ANY SUCH MOVE BY THE UNITED STATES. HE ADDED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED TWO "WARM" LETTERS FROM PRESIDENT CARTER, BUT THEY DID NOT MENTION ANY CONDITION FOR THE SUPPLY OF NUCLEAR FUEL.

2. WE WILL ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN A FULL TEXT OF THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENTS.SCHNEIDER

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, PRESS CONFERENCES, NUCLEAR WEAPONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 16-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NEWDE07039
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
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TAGS: ENRG, MNUC, IN, US, (DESAI, MORARJI)
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